



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION  
DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES  
ANDREW JACKSON BUILDING, 15<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243

March 15, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: DMRS Personnel

FROM: Stephen H. Norris, Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Mental Retardation Services

RE: Early Intervention Services

The Governor's Office of Children's Care Coordination (GOCCC) is rapidly concluding a year-long analysis of the Tennessee's Early Intervention system (TEIS). Division of Mental Retardation staff members and contract agencies have been an integral part of this analysis. Last week, preliminary recommendations which will lead to many changes in this system were presented to a group of stakeholders with a follow-up memo from Mary Rolando, GOCCC Policy Analyst.

The purpose of this analysis has been to guide TEIS toward an efficient, effective service and administrative system while providing as many Tennessee families as possible with quality Early Intervention services. Because I have been a part of the Leadership Team that has guided this effort, I strongly support the recommendations being made as a total package of reforms.

The report of the analysis is being finalized and prepared and must be presented to Ms. Lana Seivers, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education for approval before changes to the system can begin. Until we receive details about implementation of the recommendations, DMRS staff who work with Early Intervention providers should continue their work as usual. We anticipate that there will be changes but we will attempt to make those transitions as smooth as possible.

I understand the feelings that many of you have about Early Intervention and the agencies that provide this service. I was honored to be chosen to be part of the Leadership Team guiding this analysis and I have not taken this responsibility lightly. I think my experiences at the Town Hall meetings have helped me realize the importance of supporting families with appropriate services when their children are young.

Thank you for your commitment to Tennessee families and to successful reform of Tennessee's Early Intervention System.

SHN/gf